

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated September 21, 2004, please consider the following amendments and remarks made in a good faith attempt to move prosecution of this application forward to a proper allowance of the claims.

Please note that any and all fees associated with this response, including any applicable extension fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.136, and any fees for newly presented claims, may be charged to the deposit account of the undersigned, Account No. **50-0894**.

Applicant here requests such extensions under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 as may be necessary to render this response timely.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 1 currently stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(2) as being indefinite as the terms "tips and barbs" renders the claims vague and indefinite. Examiner states that typically a hook will only have a single tip and a single barb. Please note that "tips" has been changed to "tip" and "barbs" has been changed to "barb" in the language of claim 1.

Claim Objections

Claim 1 currently stands objected to as claim 1, line 3, the second occurrence of "or" should be changed to "of." Please note that "or" has been changed to "of" in the language of claim 1.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 2 currently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Japanese Patent No. 2001-314137 issued to Takamura ("Takamura") and U.S. Patent No. 5,526,603 issued to Fujii et al. ("Fujii"). Claims 1 and 2 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,691,449 issued to Hoben ("Hoben"). However, Applicant respectfully submits that in view of the claims of the present application, as amended, each of the rejections above is obviated. Note that claim 2 has been withdrawn from prosecution and claim 3 has been newly added.

Applicant points out that each of the documents cited by the Examiner discloses only a fish hook made of (or essentially of) titanium or an alloy thereof. Each reference discloses either a fishhook made of bent titanium wire (See Takamura and Hoben); or, a piece of titanium pressed into a hook (See Fujii). However, what each reference does not disclose is a fish hook made of some other material having a titanium layer deposited upon the base material of the fishhook. Applicant's claims, as currently amended, are drawn towards a fish hook having an outer surface comprised of titanium or an alloy thereof.

The fishhooks disclosed in the documents cited by Examiner are comprised of titanium throughout the hook structure. By contrast, Applicant claims a fishhook whereby another material may be placed in combination with a titanium coating. This distinction is an important one as the fishhooks of the cited documents are necessarily more costly as a result of the relatively high cost of titanium. Applicant's invention, however, provides for a tremendous savings in cost as relatively cheaper materials (such as aluminum or steel) may be the primary constituent of the fishhook. By successfully coating the relatively

cheap material with titanium- Applicant's fishhook retains all of the desirable qualities of a fishhook comprised of titanium throughout the hook structure.

Applicant's invention, as claimed, provides for a fishhook that resists corrosion, is lightweight yet strong, has high sharpness retention qualities, and is cheaper to produce than those fishhooks cited by Examiner. While Applicant's invention may provide for a relatively small cost saving for an individual hook, multiplying that relatively small saving by the large number of fishhooks produced (typically on the order of tens of thousands), yields a significant cost saving. Summarily, Applicant's invention provides for a fishhook that is more cost effective than those pointed out by Examiner and retains the properties that make a titanium hook desirable.